

# HEROES

## In the War on Terror

Each week the Defense Dept. highlights the military men and women who have gone above and beyond in the global war on terror.



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Kealakekua, Hawaii  
*Bronze Star recipient*

### Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Bradley Sapp

Petty Officer Sapp, a combat cameraman, was assigned for two months to a group of Army Rangers in the dangerous and unpredictable area around and in Ramadi, Iraq, where he participated in 30 missions. In the early hours of May 28, 2006, the team conducted a raid on an enemy stronghold and captured seven suspected insurgents. But as the team started to leave the area, a large IED detonated and immobilized one of their Stryker vehicles. Several of the Rangers were injured. Enemy combatants opened fire from sniper positions – and detonated other IEDs that had been emplaced in the area and along the team's route.

In a situation like this, Sapp puts down his camera and picks up his gun. "This job as a combat cameraman isn't just about capturing video or photos," he said later, "but also being an asset and a team member to whatever unit I am attached to." Sapp and his team jumped out to establish a security perimeter so that another team could safely help tow the vehicle out of the area. Sapp and the Rangers began firing back at the enemy. One soldier was hit in the chest, but survived thanks to his body armor. After five hours of fierce combat, the teams managed to recover the disabled vehicle and return to their base – even as enemies continued to fire on them and set off IEDs. For his work in Iraq, Sapp was awarded the Bronze Star on Jan. 26, 2007. Fleet Combat Camera Group Pacific [story](#).



Oswego, N.Y.  
*Bronze Star with "V" recipient*

### Army Reserve Sgt. Ryan Taylor

"We talk a lot in this culture about heroes and for some reason we think professional athletes are heroes, rock stars are heroes, and movie stars are heroes. Ladies and gentlemen, this is a hero." That is how one lieutenant described Sgt. Taylor, because Taylor's modesty would surely prevent him from ever describing himself as a "hero."

On Feb. 22, 2006, Taylor and his intelligence team headed out to search for roadside bombs in a volatile region of Afghanistan. They had received word that a bomb had exploded in the area the night before, so his team – a combination of Afghan national police officers, Army intelligence personnel, and U.S. military police – planned to gather any information and evidence about the explosion. By studying the bomb's components, they might be able to determine who manufactured it – and how to protect against similar devices in the future. They climbed to the top of a ridge to scout the valley below, where the bomb was supposed to be. There were no civilians in sight, which instantly put Taylor on alert. The wooden box supposedly holding the shards of the bomb drew the team's attention. Yet, instead of pieces of an exploded bomb, the box held a receiver for an anti-tank landmine – and a large rocket. Having hardly any time to think, Taylor grabbed the two Afghan police officers near him and jumped on top of them in a ditch, just as the weapon exploded. The flying shrapnel found its mark with Taylor – but his body armor protected him from serious injury. The Afghans had been wearing only flannel shirts, and so were saved by Taylor's split-second decision. For his actions, he was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" on Jan. 6, 2007. Oswego County News 10 [story](#).